

Eligibility

To be eligible for funding, your project must benefit communities that lie wholly within the Scottish & Southern Electricity Networks (SSEN) area. If you are unsure who your distribution network operator is, please check here:

<https://www.ssen.co.uk/about-ssen/who-is-my-distributor/>

Key information

Who can I contact if I have any questions or need guidance?

Colin McMillan (central southern England)
Community Investment Manager
01738 344360
colin.mcmillan@sse.com

Carol Masheter (north of Scotland)
Community Investment Manager
01738 351576
carol.masheter@sse.com

Where does this money come from?

SSEN has established this fund to support communities in our power distribution network area to improve local resilience. This is shareholder funded and is designed to support communities in their transition towards net zero carbon emissions.

Who can apply?

- Community groups based within the SSEN distribution area.
- You don't need to be a registered charity to apply, but your organisation must have a constitution (governing document or set of rules) and be set up on a not-for-profit basis. If you are unsure if your group is eligible, please contact us for advice.

How do I apply?

If your project meets the fund criteria, please complete an application form, which can be requested from SSEN or downloaded from:

[SSEN Powering Communities to Net Zero Application Form](#)

Completed forms should be submitted by e-mail to colin.mcmillan@sse.com.

How much is the fund worth?
How much can I apply for?

The fund will be managed as one fund between the north of Scotland and central southern England with a total fund value of £570,000 in 2024. In most cases, you can apply for funding from £1,000 up to a maximum of £15,000. In exceptional circumstances, multi-community area funding to a maximum of £40,000 can be considered. The panel will consider value for money and may award less than requested.

What is the timetable?

Round opens	Monday 15 th July 2024
Deadline for applications	Saturday 31 st August 2024
Awards made	Late October 2024

- Applications received after the deadline will not be eligible.
- Applicants can only receive one grant award per round.

How are decisions made?

The SSEN Powering Communities to Net Zero Fund Panel will review applications and determine which projects should receive funding. The panel comprises representatives of the community, organisations with expertise in low carbon technology, community resilience planning, and supported by members of the SSEN management team.

What can grants be used for?

The fund will provide support for projects which create a stronger, coordinated resilience framework for local communities.

What are the criteria for the fund?

The fund will support projects that enhance community facilities, services and communication specifically to mitigate the impact of, or support the local response to a significant emergency such as extended power loss or severe weather events or climate change.

Please note - when assessing applications, *priority* will be given to:

- a) Projects which support communities who are particularly remote or isolated and have experienced emergency events due to poor weather in the past.
- b) Projects in areas affected by recent significant weather events, including storms and flooding, which resulted in extended power loss.
- c) Projects which demonstrate innovative approaches to improving the resilience of vulnerable community members.
- d) Projects which support areas which can be difficult for emergency services to respond to events in.
- e) Projects from communities which have been identified as having low resilience.
- f) Projects where communities work together towards local resilience planning.
- g) Projects that support communities make progress towards net zero ambitions.

Project Guidance

- If purchasing equipment, consider how it will be stored and maintained.
- We require at least two competitive quotes for work between £1,000 and £10,000 and at least three quotes for work above £10,000. If this is not possible or appropriate, please tell us why.
- Ensure any staffing cost is provided at or above the living wage.
- Ensure that you research low carbon alternatives in line with net zero ambitions.
- Communities seeking funding of this nature would often have community emergency plans in place, having communicated with the local authority and / or emergency services. The application should demonstrate how these are complimented.
- If applying for a power source, you must complete a Technical Specification Form in addition to this application. This should include detail confirming that the backup power is essential, fit for purpose, and that installation, security, storage and maintenance considerations have been fully appraised.
- Please ensure you attach your constitution, latest annual accounts, bank statement, copy of AGM (if applicable), and any other relevant documents.

When must grants be spent by?

- All awardees must be able to draw down funds before 31 March 2025. Grants should then be spent within 12 months of being paid.

What happens when the project is finished?

- At the end of the activity period you must submit a final evaluation report in which we will ask you to fully report on the project and its outcomes.

Are there any activities or items SSEN are unable to support?

- Projects which do not benefit people living within the SSEN distribution areas.
- Actions that are in conflict to the interests of SSEN.
- Defibrillators.
- Individuals.
- The advancement of religion or politics.
- The repayment of loans or payment of debts.
- Costs already incurred or activities which will take place before we have decided on an application (retrospective funding).
- Payments for activities which are the responsibility of statutory authorities.